

BOOK NOTICE

CHARLES B. HEISER. 2003. **Weeds in My Garden: Observations on Some Misunderstood Plants.** (ISBN 0-88192-562-4, hbk.). Timber Press, Inc., 133 S.W. Second Avenue, Suite 450, Portland, OR 97204-3527, U.S.A. (Orders: www.timberpress.com, 800-327-5680, 503-227-2878, 503-227-3070 fax). \$22.95, 260 pp., 29 color photos, 30 line drawings, 5 1/2" × 8".

From the dust jacket: "Weeds, by their nature, get around. This book treats about 140 weeds, and more than half of these may be found throughout most of North America. Many were originally native to eastern North America, and others first came from Eurasia. The author chooses weeds that have found their way into "his garden," the Botany Experimental Field at Indiana University where he has grown plants for more than half a century."

Reading through Heiser's wonderful book on weeds brought back pleasant childhood memories. For I know weeds from a different kind of "garden," my dad's cotton field in southwestern Oklahoma. Dad was a cotton farmer and a good one at that. Being born during cotton harvest time (in the fall) in the middle of the 20th century, mother tells me I made my first trip to a cotton field at the early age of a few days to one week. It was there in those cotton fields back home where I had my first and up close encounters with plants, albeit cotton plants. I didn't do any collecting (not that I remember) except for lots of sleep in the shade of the cotton wagon. I occasionally took a ride down the cotton rows on the top of mother's cotton sack. By the time cotton is ready to harvest most of the weeds have been pretty much eliminated from the "garden" by either a cultivator or by a hoe. As I got older I discovered weeds through "chopping cotton" with a hoe, and it didn't take long to learn that "chopping cotton," meant chopping weeds. Dad taught me—early in life—my first lessons in identifying plants (weeds). Positive "identification" of cotton field "weeds" was of the utmost importance; dad made sure of that, for "chopping cotton" was all about weed identification ... that is, all of the "unwanted" plants growing sometimes intimately with those beautiful cotton plants. What is a weed? For me it was any plant but cotton?—*Barney Lipscomb, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, 509 Pecan Street, Fort Worth, TX 76102-4060, U.S.A., barney@brit.org.*